

Liam Gillick  
**Weapons Grade  
Pig Work**

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Aboveboard. I really am honest and open now. More and more. Since being out here. It's the place. It's bigger and softer. It's a better way to work. I've employed a bunch of people. Back where I came from the old cynics said, "I don't think you're being totally aboveboard with us." Aces in their places! That's my only response. When I shout that out these days everyone runs to their station and leverages their core competencies. That's what I want to achieve. So I can spend some time in my car moving around, sliding across town, aware that things are getting done. That's the way I've been doing it since I moved out here. Those old-school pseudo-academics are totally acleistic. Completely clueless. Across the piece we have a good set up here. The constant sun is affecting the entire project. We're aiming for efficiency improvements "across the piece," get it? Action. That's what it takes to really do something these days. Undertaking given tasks; putting things into practice. "Don't bother me while I'm actioning my deliverables." That's what I told the guys the other day. Whoops and hollers all around. It's full on here. Full action. Action items left right and center. Screw it. I have short-term goals that require a defined measure of work to complete. And that's what I am going to deliver. Basically a dynamic, proactive version of my very own to do list, 24/7. Actionable. Actionable. Actionable. That's the way it has to be from now on. So what if I clean my dashboard with a toothbrush? Action has to be taken at all times. Look, let's address things realistically for a change. I address things these days. I insist on it from the guys. No more "doing," "tackling," or "completing." I told them how these words nicely avoid making a commitment to which I might be held accountable. Semi-autonomy is the name of the game from here on in. "I will address all of your concerns in the upcoming weeks." Screw you and screw all your doing and making. It's a complete adhococracy as far as "work" is concerned from now on. A minimally structured studio where teams are formed as needed to address specific problems. You know what? Admin is written on my T-shirt. It's the word of the week. I told the girl who works in the coffee place. Political correctness already beat brevity when Secretary became Administrative Assistant. But brevity is back. "Get on the horn with my Admin." She stared at me. But in a real way. Look, we've all got to start embracing the trivial tasks we used to be far too qualified to suffer through. Adoption processes have to be enacted. People have to step along the path from cautious cynic to submissive consumer of my stuff. Aggressive mediocrity is the best way to achieve this. I had to drive back to the coffee place because I hadn't made my point clearly



Lucas Cranach's illustration of grappling techniques from the military treatise *The Art of Wrestling: Eighty-Five Devices* (1539)

enough. I told her. I am making a conscious effort to ensure that the bare minimum, and nothing more, is achieved. Get it? Now she will be impressed. In total “agreeance” with me. That’s all I ask for in the studio. A degree of “agreeance.” It’s a much fancier way of saying agreement, don’t you think? “Are we in agreeance?” More professional but with a sunny split that catches the mood out here. I want everyone to just air it out. To discuss issues openly. “Let’s get the team together and air it out this aft.” That’s this morning’s email to the team. I will be here all day. After a little nap it will be lunch “Al Desko.” The other day, once I had shuffled the wagon into its spot, I was amazed at the commitment around me. “I slept in so I’m having breakfast Al Desko.” Yep, that’s the spirit. The guys love me. They even made me a bumper sticker. “ALAP.” As Late As Possible. Get it? They love me. But I had to get serious with them. We had a little get-together at the Peruvian place and I made a little speech. I explained that ALAP is not funny – it’s a philosophy now and we are really moving along on it. Look. We are going to meet our deadlines at the last possible moment in order to avoid receiving additional pressure. I have told everyone here to just say to themselves, “I finished it last week, but I’m going to submit it ALAP.” Alignment. Consensus. That’s how we get things done. “Can we align on lunch orders?” “Can we align on production?” “Can we align for just a second?” All-hands meeting. That’s the new mandatory meeting for everyone here. Every morning, every evening. We’ve got things to do. I called from the car this morning. “Bob? We need an all-hands every morning and every evening.” Bob’s the only person I brought with me out here. A real alpha geek. He syncs all the devices and keeps tabs on the alpha pups. I realized that to keep up with the competition I would need six alpha pups in here for focus groups every month. They are all completely amped. They are so amped up about the new work. At first we just blew around some anacronyms. No one remembers what the letters stand for any more. Really useful. RADAR, ASCII, and SNAFU. I’ve been tweeting them. And the alpha pups are all on top of the best anecgloats. All those stories that make us look good and on the ball all the time. The main thing we are trying to achieve as a team here is a sense that we are animal spirits. Back where I come from some say we are victims of an irrational optimism that is driving us to risk our credibility on half-baked ideas. But I have a team that has been anointed. No one here can do anything wrong in my eyes. It’s not a time to anonymize anyone around here. That would just lead to anticippointment. Everything here lives up to the hype. I am all appetite – I told that to the girl at the coffee

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place. My level of interest is off the charts. I am buzzed. I walked in the other day and shouted, “Don’t spend another minute on this shit until we get a sample of collector appetite.” Apple polish everything, that’s my new motto. Suck up and flatter some egos for a change. Back home they’re all armchair generals. I can take that. They might speak critically, but they have no experience in the field. They always talk “around.” They need to dialogue around my choice of work these days. Look, fire your arrows, kiddos. But if you don’t have any more arrows to fire, I think we’re finished here. Just give me an ask if you have anything to say to me. Stop making so many requests. That won’t cut it. I want to know where you all stand on the latest “collector ask.” Everything is an assignment capsule out here since I got the team really pumped. Everyone has a clearly defined job description. I told them after a long lunch: “Stop arguing about objectives and start handing out assignment capsules.” That got them focused. Goddammit. The pressure is on. I am suffering from an extreme case of assmosis. Don’t they realize how much sucking up I have to do? At this juncture my availability is going to be severely limited if people don’t start appreciating the degree of focus out here. Babylonian orgy? OK. You got it. It’s all a fucking bag of snakes back where I come from. Out here I can get work done. You can call it wallpapering fog, but that’s your loss. Call it weapons grade. Now you’re talking. Come out to the sun, stop testiculating about your pig work and start working the problem.

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Liam Gillick is a British artist who studied fine art at Goldsmiths College, London, graduating in 1987. His work deploys multiple forms to expose the new ideological control systems that emerged at the beginning of the 1990s.

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